

IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: TESTING THE MEDIATORY ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed direct and indirect effects of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. On the basis of previous studies, one exogenous variable (Emotional Intelligence) and two endogenous variables, i.e. job satisfaction, and organizational commitment were analyzed through structural model. The participants were 419 academic leaders in Tamil Nadu Universities. They were chosen through Stratified Purposive Random Sampling Method. The results of the study indicate that emotional intelligence direct and indirect effects on job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Moreover, emotional intelligence not only has a direct effect on job satisfaction, it also has an indirect effect on organizational commitment. Job satisfaction has a strong direct positive effect on organizational commitment. The mediatory role of job satisfaction in the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment is confirmed in the study.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Job satisfaction, Organizational Commitment

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Emotional Intelligence is of vital importance in the personal as well as the professional life of individuals. Goleman (1995) says that an emotionally intelligent person is

likely to be skilled in two key areas namely “Personal Competence”- how one manages the self, and “Social Competence”- how one manages relationships. EI is nothing but the ability to understand one’s emotions and those of people around us. Emotional Intelligence is one’s subconscious ability to create positive outcomes in one’s relationships with others and with oneself, by being in control of how one responds to the world around (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020). Emotional intelligence as a form of intelligence “that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thoughts and actions”. Organizational commitment, as shown by two decades of research, is considered an important predictor for some positive and negative outcome variables (Meyer *et al.*, 2002). They believe that Employees with strong affective commitment to the organization perform better than those with lower levels of affective commitment. Specific employee attitudes relating to job satisfaction and organizational commitment are of major interest to the field of organizational behaviour and the practice of human resource management (Gopinath, 2020a). People get involved with work for several reasons. Some for money, some for praise, some for humanitarian service, some because of societal expectation, etc. In any way they look at work, the end product will be satisfaction; which, when not attained, turnover ideation sets in. People move from one job to another not because they enjoy moving, but because they are looking for that job that can brings out the best in them and also help them to attain satisfaction which will determine their level of commitment to such an organization (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020 b).

One of the factors that could contribute to organizational commitment is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and others (Goleman, 2001). Emotional intelligence or emotional quotient (EQ) is the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict (Gopinath *et al.*, 2020). Emotional intelligence impacts many different aspects of one’s daily life, such as the way an individual behave and the way he/she interact with others. In the last decade or so, a growing body of research regarding the importance of emotional intelligence for successful teachers has been witnessed (Gopinath, 2020b). Underlying this research interest is the view that people with high emotional intelligence competencies are more likely than less emotionally intelligent people to gain success in the workplace. Particularly, scholars have noted that social skills are essential for teachers (Sivakumar & Chitra, 2016); as individuals ascend the organizational hierarchy, social intelligence becomes an increasingly relevant determinant of who will and who will not be successful (Hooijberg *et al.*, 1997; Zaccaro, 2001).

Little research has been conducted in an organizational context and therefore as Dulewicz and Higgs (2000) suggested there is need for rigorous research to underpin the usefulness of emotional intelligence in organizational settings whether public or private on both personal and organizational levels. To the extent of my knowledge, it seems that none of the studies have investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment among academic leaders in the context of India. Furthermore, researches that have empirically examined relationship between these three variables have reported mixed findings and observed weak to modest relationships. In this perspective, therefore, the present study gains significance as the results can assist the teachers and organizations in enhancing the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of the academic leaders.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Emotional Intelligence Effect on Organizational Commitment

The organization commitment can be described as the extent to which an employee's positive or negative attitudes towards the organization as a whole and not the employee's specific job in that organization (Alavi *et al.*, 2013). The EI had significant positive relationship with three components of organization commitment which are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Shafiq & Akram Rana, 2016; Gopinath, 2020 c). Finding suggests that employees with higher emotional intelligence had a higher organizational commitment (Moradi & Ardahaey, 2011), Stress resilience by development of Emotional Intelligence (Gopinath, 2014 b) and also perceives less stress (Gopinath, 2014 a). The affective commitment includes the affirmative feelings of closeness and attachment to the organization. Normative commitment in the sense that responsibility to remain in an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1990).

Motivation of employee is an important factor to achieve the goals. So employees whose motivation level is high are more ready and dedicated to achieve the organizational goals (Alavi *et al.*, 2013). The study shows that the commitment of employees to prefer to remain in the organization will be high, if the human resource managers or department heads satisfy their needs (Nordin, 2012; Gopinath, 2020 d). It also describes that emotionally intelligence academic staffs are those who wish to stay with the organization and are dedicated to put the maximum efforts on its behalf (Nordin, 2012; Gopinath, 2020e). The organizational commitment had a particular importance to health related organization's performance and productivity as satisfied nurses are more committed to their job and on the other hand, absenteeism, grievances and turnover are the end result of nurses who were dissatisfied (Khalid *et al.*, 2018). In the study to examine the effect of emotional intelligence and the effect of leadership behavior and the moderating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship among leadership behaviour and EI, the findings reveals that EI had significant effect on employees readiness for change and importantly the organizational commitment (Gelaidan *et al.*, 2016). A research model was, therefore, developed on the basis of theories and previous studies, and paths among the variables were proposed in the model, and direct and indirect effects of the relationships were investigated (Gopinath, 2011 a).

The results of previous studies revealed that the use of emotions in emotional intelligence had strong links with organizational commitment in spite of the weak and average links between the control of emotions and understanding emotions with organizational commitment (Gopinath, 2011 b). Generally, positive correlations were found between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment. Also, the researchers stated that emotional intelligence is a key factor in increasing organizational commitment. In contrast, Wong and Law (2002) showed that emotional intelligence did not associate significantly with organizational commitment. Guleryuz *et al.* (2008) found too that emotional intelligence does not have significant direct path on organizational commitment. But job satisfaction was a mediator between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment.

2.2. Emotional Intelligence Effect on Job Satisfaction

Emotional intelligence is an important predictor of key organizational outcomes including job satisfaction (Daus and Ashkanasy, 2005). According to the theory of emotional intelligence, a person who is able to understand and is aware of one's own feelings, and controls stress, negative emotions (Kafetsios and Zampetakis, 2008), and feeling of frustration, (Sy *et al.*, 2006), can certainly have better relationships with colleagues and supervisors, which ends in increasing job satisfaction (Wong and Law, 2002), organizational commitment (Sy *et al.*, 2006) and better job performance (Kafetsios and Zampetakis, 2008). The employees will disclose job

satisfaction when they had positive feelings and the dissatisfaction will exhibit while they had negative feelings (Khan *et al.*, 2017). The emotion had a significant factor at the workplace. The study shows that emotion can predict satisfaction while satisfaction had an effect on performance (Khan *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, the employees with high emotional intelligence and job satisfaction produce the best performance in their workplace (2011 c). The productivity of an employee will always depend upon his level of job satisfaction and it influences retention also (Sivakumar & Chitra, 2018). The researchers in psychological and organizational had defined emotional intelligence as a skill, ability and aptitude of an individual to recognize, assess and control emotions. The research to examine the relationship between EI, frontline employee adaptability and job satisfaction of power utility in India found that a positive relationship between EI and frontline employee adaptability especially all the aspects of EI positively impacted job satisfaction (Sony & Mekoth, 2016).

Hypotheses

H₁: Emotional intelligence has a positive direct effect on Organizational Commitment.

H₂: Emotional intelligence has a positive direct effect on Job Satisfaction.

H₃: Job satisfaction has positive and direct effect on Organizational Commitment.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) can all be considered as major reasons for the above mentioned situations in an organization. Emotional intelligence (EI) skills and competencies are considered necessary for workplace success, job performance, and effective leadership (Bar-On, 2006). This study specifically is focused on emotional intelligence and it is considered as a possible factor influencing job satisfaction, and organizational commitment at workplace. Considering the literature, the following questions were proposed for indirect paths in the suggestive model:

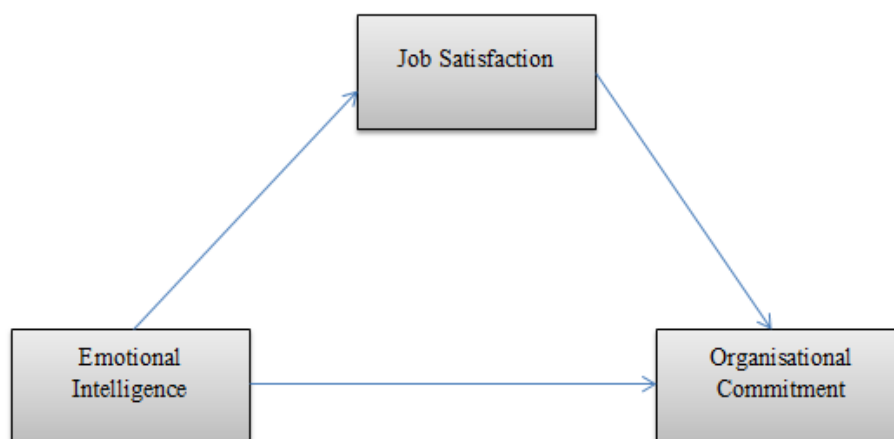


Fig.1. Research model

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. The Conceptual Model

Based on the literature review, hypotheses were developed and research gaps identified. The following research framework is proposed for this study on Tamilnadu higher education institutions. The framework consists of the one independent variable, emotional intelligence, and one dependent variable, organizational commitment, mediator job satisfaction.

3.2. Developing the Research Instruments

The research instrument for the study was developed by adapting measures from the existing body of literature. In total, 20 items were used to measure the emotional intelligence (Mayer *et al.*, 2000). Job satisfaction was measured using five items adopted from the work by (Gopinath & Ganesan, 2014). Organizational commitment was measured with Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by (Allen and Mayer, 1990; Gopinath, 2020). As it is necessary to check the adaptableness of the instrument to an Indian setting, a pilot study was conducted to check the construct validity and reliability. Results of the pilot study established the construct validity and reliability of the instrument.

3.3. Sample Design

A questionnaire was administered to respondents using systematic sample design. The scope of the study was limited to Universities of Tamilnadu. After recognizing the respondents, the researcher adopted a Stratified Purposive Random Sampling Method to collect data equally from all the universities to represent the universe of the population under investigation. The researcher for the adopted a two pronged strategy of sending the instrument to the respective respondents through their personal e-mail besides approaching them in person or through a common contact to collect data. After careful scrutiny, 419 samples (25%), which were complete in all respects alone where included for the study. The incomplete and ambiguous in nature are not included for the study.

3.4. Data Analyzes and Results

This section delivers detailed information about the analysis approved out for the current research and considerably the contribution that the current work was done to the existing stock of knowledge to the current area of interest. Following the logic of the quantitative research advocates that structural equation modeling (SEM) provides an opportunity for the researcher to do the in-depth analysis of the effect of one construct on another (Ramamoorthy *et al.*, 2016) and Kline (2015) a full-fledged SEM has been performed. The output of the SEM analysis explicitly indicates that the given model fits and describes the data precisely.

With some measurement scales, modification indices, i.e. deleting some of the indicators, were used for obtaining acceptable fit. The parameter estimates, t-values, and Goodness of fit index in the first order confirmatory factor analysis for emotional intelligence, occupational stress, and organizational commitment revealed good fit of the data, and there was an acceptable fit of data in the job satisfaction. At the end, second-order confirmatory factor analyses were used for all variables except organizational commitment assuming that the factors are not correlated together. According to Kline (2001), when first-order factors are oblique (assumed factors are correlation), second-order confirmatory factor analysis can be used. Therefore, when first-order factors (like emotional intelligence dimensions; attention, clarity, and repair) are explained with a higher-order factor structure (like emotional intelligence), they are considered as a part of second-order confirmatory factor analysis. Factors of organizational commitment did not correlate together; therefore, oblique rotation method and second-order factor analysis could not be utilized in the exploratory factor analysis for them (Kline, 2001).

3.5. Assessment of Research Model

After assessing the reliability and validity of the measure, the initial model (fig. 1) was evaluated. Table-1 presents means, standards deviations, and the variable inter correlations.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and inter correlations among constructs

Variables	Mean	S.D	EI	JS	OC
Emotional Intelligence	35.78	6.76	1		
Job satisfaction	46.53	17.83	0.33	1	
Organizational Commitment	37.56	9.67	0.22	0.42	1

Note: $N = 419$; All correlation significant at $p < 0.05$

3.6. Structural Model

The results revealed R^2 values of 0.670, 0.441 and 0.498 for emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and organizational commitment respectively. The R^2 values support the models in-sample predictive power since it is above the required level of 0.10. Furthermore, effect sizes are calculated to assess the extent a predicting (exogenous) variable contributes to the R^2 value of an endogenous variable.

The significance of direct paths and estimate standard errors were determined. Table-2 enlisted the results of hypotheses meant for direct relationships. As per results (Table-3), there is a significant positive and direct effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction ($\beta = .47$, $t = 38.7$, $p < .001$), emotional intelligence on organizational commitment ($\beta = .59$, $t = 25.8$, $p < .001$). These results support H_1 and H_2 . The results also acknowledge the significant direct and positive effect of organizational commitment on organizational performance ($\beta = .43$, $t = 9.59$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H_3 is accepted.



Figure 1 Structural Model

Table 2 Results of Structural Model path coefficient (Direct relationships)

Hypotheses	Relationship	β	t-value	Decision
H_1	$EI \rightarrow JS$	0.47	38.7*	Supported
H_2	$EI \rightarrow OC$	0.59	25.86*	Supported
H_3	$JS \rightarrow OC$	0.43	9.59*	Supported
EI	$R^2 = 0.67$			
JS	$R^2 = 0.44$			
OC	$R^2 = 0.43$			

* $p < .001$

Table 3 Mediation Results

JS → OC	Total Effects		Direct Effects		EI → JS → OC	Indirect effects		
	β	t-value	β	t-value		β	t-value	p-value
	.34	12.490	.23	8.352		.22	5.946	.000

The variables of indirect effects were also propounded. Table -3 reveals that the indirect effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction through Organisational commitment is statistically significant. However, the effect of emotional intelligence on organizational commitment through job satisfaction is positively significant.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There are studies explaining the impact of self-actualization on organizational commitment and satisfaction of academicians (Gopinath, 2020 f) and the researcher also proved the relationship. While, the present study is developed to test the effect of some important factors on the academic leaders' productivity and effectiveness. Specifically, it investigated the effect of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction on organizational commitment in Tamil Nadu Universities. The present study examined the effect of emotional intelligence and direct impact on organizational commitment with the mediating effect of job satisfaction in academic leaders.

The results showed that emotional intelligence has positive significant effect on organizational commitment through the mediation role of job satisfaction, which is in line with the propositions of the existing research (Gopinath, 2020 g; Gopinath, 2019 a). Moreover, the results of the path analysis revealed that emotional intelligence had a significant positive impact on the job satisfaction of the sampled academic leaders, and job satisfaction positively influenced organizational commitment. It was also found that only emotional intelligence had an direct positive effect on organizational commitment through job satisfaction (Gopinath & Kalpana, 2020).

In simple words, emotional intelligence has the same meaning as self-knowledge, self-awareness, and knowing others. Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs could be presented as one of the theories related to job satisfaction. Maslow believes that the lowest level needs are physiological needs and safety, and the highest level of needs is self-actualization. It could be argued that a person with the ability of emotional intelligence gets to the stage of self-actualization. Just as Maslow clearly states, if needs of the lower level are satisfied, higher level needs show off. Therefore, in the job environment, if needs such as payment, job security, respect toward coworkers, manager, customers and organization's contract are not satisfied, the higher level of needs (i.e. self-actualization) and attention to oneself would not be satisfied. In an environment, where there are not enough economic growth and facilitation, the employees' lower level needs are not satisfied perfectly and fundamentally (Gopinath, 2019 b). Consequently, higher level needs do not show off and the individuals' needs are left at lower level needs. So, they can never be satisfied with high level of needs. Nowadays, emotional intelligence is recognized as one of the solutions for increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, the ability would be useful and beneficial if lower level needs are satisfied.

5. CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study enriches the emotional intelligence literature through an explanation of organizational commitment to expedite the emotional intelligence and further ascertain the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of academic leaders in Tamilnadu Universities. The study found that emotional intelligence can effectively lead to improved organizational commitment.

However, the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship is almost impact. The study found that a significant mediating role of job satisfaction on the linkage between emotional intelligence and academic leaders commitment. But, according to the results of this study, emotional intelligence does not have any effects on any variable. This can be explained with regard to the climate and condition of the organization investigated in the study as emotional intelligence does not have an important role in an organization with low job satisfaction and low organizational commitment. Regarding the low level of emotional intelligence, another possible explanation is that low level of emotional intelligence decreases job satisfaction, and reduces organizational commitment.

Further studies may replicate this study in private universities in Tamil Nadu and compare the findings with the results of this study. Also, gender can be used as a moderator variable in this context. Finally, future researches could be conducted by use of experimental research design.

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